1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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824 their houses. Dishes, benches, cooking-boxes, cradles, totem-
[322] poles, canoes, all were carved from this wood. The bark was
285 woven into baskets, and when dyed formed the most common
[531] ceremonial decoration.

132 Even within the forty miles of the river valley formerly occupied by the Bella Coola there are considerable variations in climate. At the mouth of the river the typical Pacific coast type is found, without great extremes of temperature and with much rain, especially in winter time. During winter, the moisture is precipitated as snow a few hundred feet above the valley, and the limit of the snow can be watched on the mountain slopes, rising or falling a few feet from day to day. Farther up the valley, the winters are colder and in many cases snow lies for weeks on the ground, and in the upper part of the Bella Coola area the winters are severe, although much more moderate than on the upper regions immediately to the east.

173 What has been the history of the inhabitants of this land?
[176] They believe that long, long ago, *Alqantăm*, the supreme god, caused their first ancestors to be created in his house, *Nusmăt-a*, in the land above, and sent them down to populate the Bella Coola valley. These first people came in groups of two or three, brothers and sisters, or occasionally man and wife, each group descending, in many cases in animal form, to a certain mountain and then making their home at its foot. They brought with them animals and fish, tools and houses, also the knowledge of ceremonial dances. In fact, they differed from the Bella Coola of the recent past only in having greater supernatural power. These first people increased with extraordinary rapidity, until each group grew into a village, bound together by a knowledge of their first ancestor. In
173 course of time the occupants of certain villages combined, as
● 361 some increased more rapidly than others, but on the whole each settlement maintained its character of being the descendants of one group of the first settlers of this world.

[175] This mythological belief is a fair picture of Bella Coola life as it was when the first white man visited the valley. Mac-

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kenzie, making his memorable overland trip to the Pacific, records coming upon Indian villages at every few miles of his course. Boas describes the way in which the inhabitants of each of these claim to be descended from one group of ancestors.

Though it is impossible to estimate the former population of the Bella Coola valley with any degree of accuracy, it must have been in the thousands. In 1922 there were surviving rather more than three hundred individuals, who live in one village on an Indian reserve near the north bank of the Bella Coola River, about a quarter of a mile from the sea. In the last century the tribe was stricken with smallpox, and since then consumption, venereal disease, measles, and other diseases of the white man have taken their deadly toll. Changed conditions of life and decay of the rich ceremonial around which centred their interests in the old days are also contributory factors in their decline. Within the last few years, however, the population has begun to increase.

Bella Coola Villages

The following list of Bella Coola villages was obtained. In an effort to learn which had been deserted in recent years, the writer always asked whether or not a town was occupied at the time of Mackenzie's visit, an event of such great interest to the grandparents of the older people that the memory of it is still preserved. Villages said to have been occupied at that time are marked with an asterisk.

Three rivers empty into the head of South Bentinck Arm, which is about one mile in width (see Plate 7). The Bella Coola, flowing from the east, enters at the southern edge, and the *Nulqyxtkwan-c* winds in from the north to the opposite angle of the head of the ford. This stream, "The Nearest River" of the Bella Coola, so-called because of its proximity to the sea, is shown on maps as the Necleetsconnay. Between the mouths of these two is the *Pe-stb*, a small stream rising

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133 on the northern side of the Bella Coola valley, east of the Nuletaconney. Before merging their waters with North Bentinck Arm the rivers flow more slowly and there are extensive tide-flats (see Plate 6). Several villages formerly clustered around their mouths.

961 (1) *Sémaus*: on the west bank of the Nuletaconney about three-quarters of a mile from the sea. Nothing is known of this long-abandoned village of which even the name is uncertain. The mountain that rises behind its site is called *Sémaus*, and it is supposed that the village had the same designation. Some of the older people state that there was no town, only a temporary hunting station, at this spot.

(2) *Tcutkmq*, "Short Feet": on the very shore of North Bentinck Arm, west and north of the mouth of the Nuletaconney. The land terminates in a tolerably square end, running north and south, and this town was at the northern edge. It was built on piles and the inhabitants could step to the ground only at low tide. This is the explanation given of the peculiar name, a reference to the curtailed walking space. Long ago it was a large town, but was probably occupied only during the winter. In summer the people are believed to have moved to *Nuxalkmc*, "The Place of Elm," on the north side of North Bentinck Arm, about one mile from its head.

[166]

[712] *(3) *Xqélûsl*, "The Fenced Town," so called because it was stockaded: near the south bank of the *Fv* ook, about a quarter of a mile from the sea, near the site of the present mission church. It was inhabited until about 1850. According to one informant this village was founded by a certain *Tsûtcmaus*, a descendant of *Tsutcmaûs*, who decided to move close to the river.

(4) *Thqlo'st*, "Small Mound," so called from the knoll on which it was situated: above *Xqélûsl*, and about one-half mile to the north of the present Bella Coola River. Its site is crossed by the road connecting the Indian village of Bella Coola with the white settlement of the same name.

(g) *Anatgaa ooli*, "Lakeward": the eastern continuation of the last mentioned." The name is explained as follows:

One of the people who came to the earth in the beginning of time, *Tsaiahanale* by name, travelled to the Shasta River, and there saw women wearing labrets. On his return to Bella Coola he carved at *Anatgaa ooli* and carved on his totem-pole" the figure of a woman with an elaborate shell labret as a memorial of his voyage. Visitors coming to his potlatches named the town from this figure.

This was one of the largest towns in the valley.

?(c) *Kimd-ic*: a small town to the north of the last, not far from the *Pe-nik*. It is assumed that it was founded by a descendant of *Tsaiahanale* named *Kimd-ic*. The consensus of opinion is that it has not been occupied for many years, but one informant recently dug up a clay pipe on the alleged site.

?(d) *Nekuk*, "When The Bone Divided": on the south shore of the Bella Coola River about a quarter of a mile from the sea. This village was founded by a certain *Kek*.

?(e) *Qoaqo-ic*, meaning doubtful, perhaps "Salty": this, the most populous village of the valley in the recent past, is still inhabited by one or two families. The inhabitants of other towns explain its large population by marriages with slaves. This is the upper, or eastern, continuation of the preceding, and the two in continuation formed a row of houses extending for three-quarters of a mile (see Plate 3).

(f) *Qoaqlqoma*, "The Treeless Place": on the north side of the Bella Coola, supposedly about half a mile above *Kimd-ic*. This village was long ago deserted.

(ee) *Tsaiahanalqa-ic*, "Where There Is Much *Isaiahanale*-ally," a kind of believe-mummed plant: some distance from

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[illegible] name, each consisting of a single row of houses, are regarded as forming one village. In each case there is an visible boundary mark.

The Bella Coola believe that their early ancestors used stone-poles, supposed references to them still be seen, even though the work of Barbeau and others on the totem-poles on the North-West Coast believes that the Bella Coola examples are not historically accurate.

the north bank of the Bella Coola,* near the lower slope of the mountain, and about three miles from the sea. It is probable that there was a town on this spot very long ago, according to the statement of one old man, and the numerous superstitions (II, p.4) in the vicinity support this view.

*(xvi) Xaxal, "Sunny," or "Fallen Sun": on the south side of the Bella Coola opposite the preceding. It was observed about 1906. This was a fairly large town, though never so big as Q!umq!a'a. The name is derived from Xax, sun, and there are two explanations given for it. One informant states that the name came from the many residences of the Sun to the first people there; another that the first chief, said to have been named Setlhaq, erected a large totem-pole, decorated with the figure of a sun. This blew down, in consequence of which the people called their town Xaxal, "Fallen Sun."

*(xvii) Xpemdē: on the south side of the Bella Coola about three miles from the sea, and a short distance below the end of the present bridge. The meaning of the name is unknown.

*(xviii) P!emaē, "Where the River Is Sufficiently Deep to Cover the Stones, but Shallow Enough to Ripple": the upper continuation of the last-named. It was deserted during the smallpox epidemic. The name of the chief who came there at the beginning of time was given as P!emaēlaē.

(xix) Sne'xmpsqē, "On the Point": on a curving promontory on the south bank of the river about four miles from the sea. It was long ago swept away when the river changed its course.

(xx) P!e'xmqē, "The Place of Foul Water": on the north bank of the Bella Coola a little above the preceding, at a place where there were a number of stagnant pools between the river and the mountains. No one knows how long ago this town was abandoned, but as the names of people living there figure in stories which are said to be of no great antiquity, it

*The river frequently changes its course, so that village sites are at a considerable distance from it very often here than at the present.

was probably deserted not many years ago. Probably a large town once is was a good fishing place.

(vii) *Tudit*, "Bald Eagle"; also on the north shore of the river, a little above the last-named. Probably washed away by a flood long ago, although traces of the salmon-rack were still visible recently.

(viii) *Nagiksudit*, "The Place of Much *gimudit*" (the fore *Agiktaun* (*crikerson*)); on the north side of the river about one mile above the preceding. This large town is believed to have been deserted long ago, though, in apparent contradiction, traces of it are said to be still visible.

"(viii) *Imaiktit*, "The Place of Dog Salmon"; on the south bank, above the last-named, at a place where a small stream enters the Baile Creek River; this divided the town into two sections. It was long deserted and the river has carried away that part of the village below the creek. The name is derived from an enormous dog salmon which is believed to have been seen at long intervals in a waterfall near this spot, always with a water-ouzel perched on its back.

(ix) *Ugnaktaun*; on the lower end of the island near Wagon-burg post office, eleven miles from the ocean. Although long deserted, traces of this village can still be seen. The meaning of the name is unknown.

"(x) *Nuklik*, "The Place of the Whirlpool"; on the south side of the river, eleven and a quarter miles from the sea. It was a village of moderate size, recently abandoned. The first occupant was said to have been *Ukumiksla*, which means, "The Place of Ice."

"(xi) *Kalla-do-i*, "The Concave Town," so called because it curved around the shore of a bay occupied now by the Baile Creek; south side, slightly above the mouth of the Nuwuk River, thirteen and a quarter miles from the sea. It was deserted about 1880.

"(xii) *Nuvipak*, "The Place of *Sipiluk*"; on the north side of the river, opposite the mouth of the same name. It also was deserted about 1880. *Sipiluk* is a kind of moss-sack

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side for some, which occurs in the valley of a small stream on the slope of the mountain.

(115) *Nalkun*, "The Place Where There Are No Falls": an offshoot from the north enters the main Bella Coola about thirty-one miles from the sea and the town was located on this creek about two hundred yards above its junction with the Bella Coola. The ruins of this moderately large town were still standing about 1870. Mackenzie reached the Bella Coola River on this place. At the time of his arrival the population was larger than usual, because the salmon-weir had withstood some heavy freshets which had destroyed several weirs on the Bella Coola, and given the inhabitants of other villages to Nalkun.

It is said that the stream at *Nalkun*, the stream *Xeiqtc*, is the only one in the whole Bella Coola valley that does not drop precipitously into a ravine leading to the main river. Its source is a spring on the end of a pocket-like valley, at the base of steep cliffs, but it does not fall down these. The town is named from this circumstance. The area around the spring is called *Nlemkaiqtc*, and it is said that some families living on the Stuart ring of it to the spot where their first ancestors came to earth, although their descendants do not know where it is located.

(116) *Sinas*: on the point between the *La'qala* (Atnarko) and *Ilo'ot* (Nascoutarko) rivers which join to form the Bella Coola. This, the most populous of the upper river towns, was deserted not long ago. The meaning of the name is unknown.

(117) *Kimkuk*, "The Place of Herbage": on the north side of the Atnarko River, a few hundred yards above the forks. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name was given on account of the hill behind the village being covered with a rank growth of plants and small bushes, but no trees.

(118) *Stuie-ki*, "The Place of Falls," so called from the strong rapids of the Atnarko at this point: on the north side of the river about six miles from the forks. This large town was long ago deserted when a large rock in the midst of the

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stream, on which the salmon-weir rested, was carried away."

The following village may be included with the above:

(17) *Nuxaxq* on the shore of North Bentinck Arm, to the east of the creek that flows into it at Green Bay. This long-deserted village was built so close to the ocean that high tides reached almost to the houses. According to one informant, the name was derived from that of the first chief sent down from above to that spot; while another connected it, etymologically, with *Nuxe*, the name of the barren district some four and a half miles up the valley of the creek. In recent years this village site has been used only as a summer camp.

The name given to the Bella Coola valley is *Nuxálk*; that given to the inhabitants of the valley, excluding those of village no. 17, is *Nuxálkmc*."

Two points must be considered with regard to the above list of towns: In the first place, can it be regarded as an accurate list, or do the towns belong to the realm of mythology? In the second place, are the customs and beliefs of the inhabitants of the different towns sufficiently similar to be described without reference to local differences?

The first question is difficult to answer. The Bella Coola undoubtedly consider the existence of these towns to be an historical fact, but so do they regard the peopling of the earth by men created in the land above. Nevertheless, the above list appears to be substantially correct. The Bella Coola, although now collected into a single village, still remember their ancient homes. One man, for example, stated as a matter of course that he was a man of *Iwaiskl*. Further inquiry elicited the information that he had been born at *Sauel*, where his father had moved at the time of the smallpox epidemic. It later appeared that my informant's father was born at *Tcomoit*, had married there, and that it was his father who had moved

[361] [173] [173] [101] [103] [128] [173] [361] [164] [166] [114]

"This explanation may be only legendary.

"Boas, p. 48, states that *Nuxalk* is only applied to the lower villages of the valley. All the writer's information was contrary to this view.

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from *Snukō*. My informant's grandchildren regard themselves as *Snukō* boys, and their names are embodied in myths of that village, although their forbears have not lived there for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of people from one village to another at earlier times, and there seems no cause to doubt the general accuracy of these. Names embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as prerogatives and have been potent factors in keeping their memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly reliable, since few contradictions were received from different informants.

Accounts obtained of the same ceremonies from the descendants of people of different villages were found in most cases to be identical. There were a few differences in custom between the people of *Ilmoo* and those of the other upper valley towns on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be considered as a tribal entity.

Boas (p. 48) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included *Pa-ɔ-ak* (no. 2), *Nā'ăqaitkwaa-ɔ* (no. 7), and *Nā'ăitkun* (no. 18).* All the older people agreed that these are the names of streams, though settlements located on them may have been known by the same designations. Names of the five villages recorded by Boas, nos. 6, 8, 9, 13, and 14, were not known by several old men questioned on the subject.

The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns recognized that their origins and customs were similar. This was also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living on South Bentinck Arm, and at the head of Dean Channel.

*Going to such men the spelling of this monograph.

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Indians from both of these areas were interviewed and it was found that, except for minor details in certain beliefs, their customs were identical with those of the Bella Coola proper. Accordingly, in this monograph, the term "Bella Coola" will be taken to include the inhabitants, not only of that valley, but of South Bentinck Arm and the head of Dean Channel. Those living on South Bentinck Arm will be referred to as *Tal'io* people, the Bella Coola term for them; those of Dean Channel as Kimsquit, the name by which they are generally known. It is an anglicized form of the word *Kemp'kut*, meaning "Canyon," by which the Bella Bella designate the people of Dean River.

VILLAGES ON SOUTH BENTINCK ARM

(18) *Jiddis*: on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about a quarter of a mile from the point that marks its junction with North Bentinck Arm. Food was obtained from an ocean fish-trap.* Long dwarsal escape as a summer camp.

(19) *Kwakdis*, "Island": east side of South Bentinck Arm, slightly north of the island opposite the Hot Springs on the west side of the fiord. The town took its name from this island. In summer the numerous inhabitants lived immediately opposite it, at a place where they had an ocean salmon-trap; in winter they moved to a fortified spot at the base of a mountain slightly further to the north. This village was blotted out by a landslide one spring long ago, and the few survivors were unable to re-establish it.

"(20)" *Tsaukwaw*: on the east side of the fiord about four miles above the last-named. A small town, whose inhabitants lived on the catch from their ocean fish-trap; it was recently deserted.

*Ocean fish-traps work as follows:—A pass is made for a series of stakes, into which the salmon enter at high tide. It is then closed with, as the falling tide lays bare the weir, the imprisoned fish can be scooped out by hand or in hand-nets.

"Mackenzie did not visit either South Bentinck Arm, or Kimsquit, but it will be convenient to mention the use of materials in such those towns which are used in them from inhabited at this time.

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(31) *Kadis*, "Ocean Fish-Trap": on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about a quarter of a mile from the *Nuit* River. It is doubtful whether this was a town, or merely a camping place of the people of *Nuit* when using their salmon-traps.

"(32) *Nuit*": on a raised mound at the south side of the mouth of the *Nuit* River, which enters the head of South Bentinck Arm from the east. The meaning is unknown. This was a populous town until the inhabitants were decimated by an epidemic of smallpox.

"(33) *Tal'as*: on the west side of the mouth of the river of the same name which flows into South Bentinck Arm from the south. The location of this village was constantly changed, owing to destructive variations in the course of the river. It was formerly a large town, and has been deserted only since 1900. This village had another name, *Tyeeaths*, "Facing," so called because its houses faced those of the town of *Nuit*.

"(34) *Ai-ai*", "At the Head": at the head of South Bentinck Arm there is a bay running south-west, into the upper end of which a small stream empties. The trail leading to the lake at the head of Rivers Inlet follows this valley. *Ai-ai*" was located on this creek, at some little distance from the ocean; the name was derived from the geographical location of the town. It has not long been deserted and must have been a populous place to judge from the numerous cemeteries (III, p. 6).

(35) *Kimquis*: on the east side of the mouth of a creek flowing into the bay at the head of South Bentinck Arm, from the south. This town was of moderate size. The meaning of the name is unknown. It is thought to be in the Rivers Inlet language.

VILLAGES AT KIMQUIS

Two rivers, the Dean from the east, and the Kimquis from the north, flow into the head of Dean Channel, and the villages of this area can be grouped according to the two rivers.

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Villages near the Dease River

"(28) *Awatlele*: the present site of the Kwanyit Indian village near the mouth of Dease River. The meaning of the name could not be learned.

"(29) *Nadel*, "Canyon": on the shore of Dease River at the bottom of the canyon. This large town was not recently deserted.

(30) *Ayat'a*, "Occupied Mound": on the north side of Dease River about one mile from the sea. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name is derived from the small mound on which it was built.

"(31) *Natcyasuk*, "Many Spawning Sockeye Salmon": on south side of Dease River, about one and a quarter miles from the sea. A large town recently deserted.

"(32) *Nacqilde*, "Place of Many Spring Salmon" on south bank about twenty-five miles from the sea. This site was not settled when people first occupied this world, but [173] *Alqun-*
tcu (I, p. 330) took possession of it.

(33) *Tyenuk*: east side of river twenty-eight miles from the sea. There is doubt about this town. It is said to have been a colony of the Kwanyit River settlements, a statement difficult to understand.

(34) *Tlenal'on*, "Where Canoes Are Left": on the north side of the river about thirty-five miles from the sea. Immediately opposite was *Sulkalin*, "Winter Trail." These two are considered as forming one town, but were probably two more than camping grounds at the spot where the winter trail to the [187] interior left the river. It is possible, however, that they formed a town, since the names of the alleged first settlers in [173] the beginning of time are preserved.

"(35) *Kelkin*: an Salmon House on the upper Dease River.

The history of the villages on the upper Dease [174] hunting, Mythological accounts of their founding were also recited, and some of the older people stated that they had been occupied until recent years. On the other hand, there are currently

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reliable traditions of Carrier settlements there. The probable explanation is that the Bella Coola formerly extended over the area, either in actual fact or according to mythology, but were supplanted by the Carriers.

The Dean River is called *Nalst*, and the generic name for the people of the Dean valley is *Satolmy*. About eighty years ago a smallpox epidemic so reduced the villages on the Kimsquit that the survivors abandoned them and moved to the Dean. At that time a certain Kimsquit man is believed to have said: "We will take their places and kill even their dogs."

Since that time, the joint settlement has suffered one epidemic after another, until a mere handful of the people survive, and they are almost entirely descended from the Kimsquit River immigrants. Within the last few years, these have requested permission from the Bella Coola to abandon Kimsquit entirely and live among them. The two groups have always been on the best of terms, but the Bella Coola have not forgotten the fate of the Dean River people and have been unwilling to admit the Kimsquit survivors.

Villages on the Kimsquit River, Sä'ok'

"(44) *Sä'ok'*: this large and important town, at the mouth of the river, was deserted at the time of the smallpox epidemic.

"(45) *Nawnäs*: this settlement can be grouped with the last-mentioned, although situated on the shore of Dean Channel, at the site of the present Menzies Cannery, six miles away. No meaning of the name is known.

Tribal Organization

The subject of this paragraph is the people of the above forty-five villages. They will be referred to as a *tribe*, and as this term is customarily limited to a political unit, a brief justification for its use is necessary.

Each Bella Coola village consisted of a single row of houses, built along the shore of a river or the ocean. The front doors

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opened out on to a wooden platform, which served as sidewalk and extended from one end of the settlement to the other. The outer side of this structure was always supported on piles; in fact, in many cases, the houses as well as the whole sidewalk were thus raised from the ground. This type of construction was necessitated by the sloping sites of the villages, but had the added advantage of being a protection against attack. The villages differed in size from insignificant settlements of three to four houses, to ones with twenty or thirty, each containing several families. The ease with which the red cedar could be split and worked into large planks made possible the construction of these large, rectangular houses which, with their horizontally laid walls and sloping roofs, presented a picture of stability and relative comfort superior to that of most Indian habitations.

Each village was practically an independent political unit. Neighbouring settlements had many common interests which threw them into contact with one another, but there was no organized cohesion between the towns of the Bella Coola valley, or between those of *Tal'is* and Kimsquit. There was still less to draw these three groups together. There was no supreme chief and no governmental meeting of the tribe as a whole. Not only were the three divisions not bound to support one another in war, they were often at loggerheads among themselves. Indeed, bloodshed between towns of the Bella Coola valley itself was not uncommon. Moreover, each group tended to merge with its neighbours. The *Tal'is* people frequently married with the Rivers Inlet and the Bella Bella; the Kimsquit with the *Owikeno* of Dean Channel and the Kitlope of Gardner Canal; and the Bella Coola of the upper valley with the Carriers.

In spite of these inconsistencies, the application of the word Bella Coola to the whole group is justified by the fact that A. Lawrence. All spoke the same language. There were dialectical differences among the people of Bella Coola, *Tal'is*, and Kimsquit, but each group could understand the

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[illegible] symbols, capital ' has not been used.

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THE *xúmay*.[1]

Before the smallpox epidemic, about 1862, there were towns on the fords and villages of Dean Channel between Kimsquit and Bella Bella. The inhabitants were called *xúmay* by the Bella Coola, and *xmay* by the Bella Bella. Their settlements were at Elcho Harbour, Green River, Cascade Inlet, and at several unidentified places. Their language is said to have differed slightly from that of the Bella Bella, but the people themselves married freely with both Kimsquit and Bella Bella, thus forming a connecting link between these tribes.

A list of *xúmay* towns was obtained from one old man, who claimed to be a descendant of the people. It was impossible to verify this information, and since he himself was not an ideal informant, the following can be regarded only as approximately correct.

(1) *Ilkw* at Elcho Harbour.

(2) *Kalak* on a ford one mile above the last named.

(3) *Ilkā* or *Tsqtsa* on a river three miles above the preceding.

(4) *Nemaiā* on a river two miles above the preceding.

(5) *Nesqual* on a ford three miles above the preceding.

(6) *Qualkm* on a ford three miles above the preceding.

(7) *Sarmalk* on a river two miles above the last named and thirty miles below Kimsquit.

According to the old man from whom the above list was obtained, *Nemaiā*, at Kimsquit, recorded earlier as village no. 45, was also populated by *xúmay* people. There was so much intermarriage between the two groups that it is now impossible to ascertain whether the inhabitants not only of *Nemaiā*, but of *Sarmalk* as well, were predominantly Kimsquit or *xúmay*.

The open plateau in which the Bella Coola River rises has always made travel possible for long distances, so that not only

[1 "Bellacoola" term for the people of inner Bellabella - Kimsquit stock who inhabited the shores of "Dean Channel" - See H. McIlwraith, Vol. II, p.284 - Analyst]

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have been many changes. Raven, the culture hero, taught the early settlers many useful arts, and they were themselves so powerful that they were able to create ceremonial and other prerogatives in a manner impossible to their descendants. Moreover, the people realize that they have been influenced by neighbouring tribes since that time, but in spite of these additions, they believe that their life is patterned on that of their earliest forbears.

As a group, the Bella Coola are philosophers. They demand a reason for everything, though once a reason has been given, and accepted, they think no more about the matter. The elaboration of Bella Coola mythology may be due in part to their desire to explain their social organization; but without question these myths, now accepted as facts, have had a great influence on the lives of the people. In fact the social structure of the tribe has tended to conform to the myths.

It is believed that each group of first people formed a village community, and pre-empted hunting-grounds in the vicinity. These usually consisted of small valleys opening from the main Bella Coola River, tracts which could thus be easily defined. Each group also took possession of a suitable part of the river for a salmon-weir, or, if located on the coast, a convenient place for an ocean fish-trap. In course of time the first people married, of necessity with members of other villages. According to mythology, and equally according to modern practice, the women usually moved to the villages of their husbands. When a child was born, it naturally grew up to share in the hunting-grounds of its father's village. Moreover, the father was able to bestow on his child various ceremonial devices, the concepts formulated on this earth. It is assumed that all the first people were mighty chiefs, able to initiate rites in a way that few modern men have been able to equal. But the mothers of these children, the first born on this earth, did not surrender the privileges of their own villages at marriage. Consequently, their children were of almost as much interest to the brothers

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tions on this subject always excited them, but every effort was made to verify the following statements.

As with names, the easiest way to understand the rights of the ancestral family in land is by first considering the mythological explanation, which mirrors conditions as they existed at the coming of white men. On reaching this earth the first people are believed to have prospected for suitable settlement sites, places where salmon and eulachon could be caught, and if possible, near side valleys where berries were abundant. Here they released the animals and plants which they had brought with them, on which they thenceforth subsisted, in accordance with the supreme deity's instructions. The members of the group pre-empted these areas for themselves. Waste land, far from any village was, and still is, free to anyone. A few years after the first settlements had been made, according to the myths, the supreme god sent down to Kimsquit a certain *Ilgamish* who allotted and marked the territory which was the property of each community, at that time a village consisted merely of a group of the four sections. No similar myth was recorded for either Bella Coola or Tal'io, although their concepts with regard to land are identical with those of the Kimsquit. This really gave a mythical sanction to the possession of land, an important matter to a people so religiously inclined as the Bella Coola.

The system of land tenure follows the same somewhat obscure principles that govern the possession of names in an ancestral family. Hunting and collecting grounds appropriated by the first people, or by their immediate descendants, are the property of their offspring, the ancestral family. The Bella Coola term for such an area is *ut'lnem*, also called, sometimes, which means "Food Supply."

It will thus be seen that [illegible] or any single individual, but belongs to a group of persons, most of whom live in a single town. The relatives of a man who intends to give a potlatch usually give him, temporarily, exclusive rights to the hunting-ground. As with names, these

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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614 621 is a more obvious social grouping than the ancestral family, though it is of the latter that a man is most proud. The member of a small, unimportant village often describes himself as a native of a neighbouring, larger one when at a distance from his home, simply as a matter of convenience.

Even before the coming of the white man, village sites were abandoned and people took up their residence with friends or [973] relatives elsewhere. In fact, mythology contains instances of [361] such migrations at the very beginning of time. In cases of this kind, memory of the earlier home has been preserved for many generations, and may perhaps be the explanation of the many villages which are described as two, and which have two names. In the early days immigrants seem always to have been welcome; they added to the numerical strength of the village, and the original inhabitants enjoyed boasting to the newcomers of their descent from the first settlers. Since any group forced to abandon their own homes naturally moved to those of relatives, there is no difficulty in understanding the process by [582] which they continued to intermarry with their new neighbours. Thus two, or even more ancestral families, inhabiting one village tended to form a closely inter-related stock. In rare instances, two unrelated ancestral families may have become inhabitants of the same village, which would unquestionably lead to intermarriage.

In most cases the endogamic tendencies already described cause the village community to be largely members of one ancestral family. In addition there are always other occu- [563] pants; strangers who have fled from their homes and sought [567] refuge among the Bella Coola; the offspring of illicit intercourse [554] with slaves; guests; foreigners, especially Carriers temporarily resident in Bella Coola; and finally slaves, without status in the community. The real inhabitants, those whose power is firmly planted in the village, are the reputed descendants of the first group of settlers, and accordingly a relative coming to [553] dwell in a village usually endeavours to obtain a name from the origin myth of the ancestral family occupying it, and thus

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ters, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact this ceremonial unity is its most important function.

With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore, each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty, others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space. Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages, each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire, often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor, and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the side-walls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the different families, or for different members of one. In many cases the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire being used for heating and for more important meals. The number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and anyone present when food is being distributed is given a share as a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall. A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important in dances.

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[Illegible] E.5 (1922-1924)[illegible]
[illegible] Bellbrook [illegible]

PLATE 9

[illegible] (a)]

Photograph by [illegible], National Museum of Canada

The site of [illegible], with the remains of the old village

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721 to attack. It is said that the Fort Rupert people once raided
648 it, but their hair became entangled in the thorns growing near the tide-flats and they were easily slain while struggling to free themselves. Two warriors escaped and hid in the branches
[727] of a huge spruce tree. They used to slip down at night and steal food, thus supporting themselves for several weeks, but
[628] were at last discovered and enslaved. On such occasions the villages of the lower and central valley usually rallied to the help of *Xemqē'ti*, the most exposed one, although there was no mechanism to enforce such assistance. The inhabitants of
[774] this town attributed their protection to *Alqaⁿtăm*, and used to claim that he had decreed that they should be immune
[361] owing to their close association with him. Though Bella Coola
[162] itself was comparatively free from molestation, Kimsquit and *Tal'io*, with smaller populations and less strategic positions, were subject to frequent attacks. At least one of the villages at
712 the head of South Bentinck Arm was defended with a stockade of cedar trunks, set upright in a double row and entered by a
[648] water-gate with a drop-door.[1] This water-gate protected the
[724] residents on many occasions, and it is remembered that one Fort Rupert raiding-party was annihilated while endeavouring to batter down the door with a huge ram. The defenders, armed with muskets, picked off the attackers as they struggled in the open.

721 All the older men were emphatic in stating that most of their raids were in revenge for such attacks. Although such statements were partisan, they were confirmed in every way
[642] and were probably tolerably correct. Lack of a strong govern-
[628] ment was a serious handicap to the Bella Coola. After being
[622] assailed, the members of the town would discuss retaliation, and if unanimity of opinion was reached, that course was de-
[701] cided upon. Public opinion alone selected the leader, usually a man who had given a number of potlatches, especially one whose position had been made stronger by previous validation

[1] It is said that such stockades surrounded other villages, but definite information on this point was unavailable.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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105 of their omnipresence; the guiding force of public opinion is
182 seen as a check on individual licence, fostered or inculcated by
[626] the ties which hold together ancestral families and make it impossible for a man to lead an isolated life where others will not be affected by his actions. If the white man is willing to receive new ideas, he will learn much from the comments of the Bella Coola on his own customs. Many have been to
[556] Victoria or Vancouver, and they feel that the contrasts of wealth observable in such big cities are atrocious; they ask
[602] how this is compatible with Christianity. They feel that it is unnatural for a man not to receive support from his cousins of
[556] all degrees; that the hoarding of wealth for the mere gratification of personal desires is selfish; that the selling of land is extraordinary; and that failure to ascribe every incident to supernatural causes is sacrilegious. These differences of viewpoint on so many matters explain the first impression of strangeness. A careful investigator comes to realize that he is among a people who fundamentally differ but slightly from his compatriots, though outwardly they have little in common. With respect to love, ambition, parental affection, sense of honour, pride, intelligence, even humour and vanity, the Bella Coola are essentially similar to ourselves. Unfortunately, these characteristics are expressed in ways unintelligible and often repellant to the casual traveller. If he will only look beneath the surface, he will find a people who are neither saints nor sinners, but essentially human, with the faults and follies as well as the elements of strength and wisdom which comprise, as Kipling puts it, "Men in a world of men."

177 The coming of the white civilization has been cataclysmic
[161] to the Bella Coola. Within two generations they have been
[361] reduced to a mere handful; instead of living in scattered villages, roaming the mountains for game and fishing at will, they now dwell in a single settlement and the taking of animals and fish is subject to law; the introduction of metal tools and mechanical appliances has revolutionized their mode of life; new foods, new clothing, new furniture has altered their living conditions; fermented drink has presented a factor unknown

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)892
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as the origin common names of tribes. 410

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have detailed down in numbers, and a few only of their own population villages are still inhabited, namely, Sàsq, at the head of Dean Inlet; Xuit'ē'l, at the mouth of Salmon River; Nuqu'lte (which embraces two villages, at the mouth of Bella Coola River; Sūs'ūs, twenty-eight miles up Bella Coola River; and Ts'ūs, at the head of South Bentinck Arm. The dialect of Xuit'ē'l and Sàsq differs slightly from that of the other villages. The following is a list of their former villages, most of which are still inhabited at certain seasons, although not regularly:—

1. Sàsq.
2. Xuit'ē'l. The tribe of this place is called Xuit'ē'noh.
3. Nuqu'lte, embracing the villages K'nuk'ūte and Sxik'ē'el on the north side, Ts'ūs'ūs and Nuxu'ūmkinut on the south side of the river.
4. Snuqē'l.
5. Tsemsi'ūl.
6. Sxet'ē'ls.
7. Xi'k'ūsūs.
8. Axe'ūmut.
9. Nuk'ūsqumūs.
10. Tsqumūk'ūm.
11. Xe'ūk'ūlut.
12. Xuitūt'ūq.
13. Sūs'ūs, twenty-eight miles from the sea.
14. Sxet'ē'xtell. Nos. 4 to 14 are situated along Bella Coola River, and are given as they are met with in ascending the river.
15. Xūsqēl, at the confluence of Bella Coola and Dean (?) Rivers.
16. Ts'ūs, at the head of South Bentinck Arm, embracing K'ūsqē, Ts'ūs, Xū'ā', Ā'ūtq.
17. K'ūsūm, at the bay of that name in the southern extension of Bentinck Arm. On the north entrance of Bentinck Arm were the K'ūsūt'ūl, but it is doubtful whether they belonged to the Bilqula or to the Ht'ūmuk. The latter call the people of Dean Inlet K'ūsūtq.

Each of these tribes is subdivided into gentes, which appear to be arranged in exogamic groups. I insert the names of the following gentes, which bear the names of their ancestors:—

Gentes of the Nuqu'lte:

1. Tsk'ūl'a (=looking down on his family).
2. Nyuqnqu'lmuq; Qē'mūsta name: Xū'ūkyūsūl (see p. 411)
3. Sūsūqūlē'uq.
4. Ke'ūsqē'uq.
5. Pē'ūlus.

Gentes of the Xuit'ē'lmuq:

1. T'ūsk'ūmē'ūt.
2. K'ūnqūtē'ūt.
3. ?

Gentes of the Tsūs'ūs:

1. Isūsūmūt (=making good fire); Qē'mūsta name: T'ūtūsūtūl (=a new generation from rain).
2. Qumūt'ūk.
3. Tsemqē'ūkyus.
4. Ha'ūmūk.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]